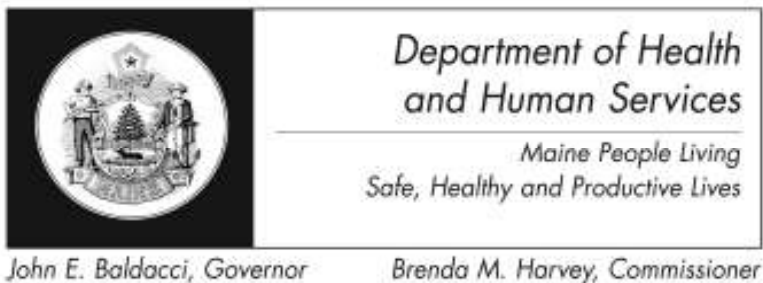


**For more information about
birth defects, contact your doctor or the Maine Birth Defects
Program**

Maine Department of Health and Human Services
Center for Disease Control and Prevention
Division of Family Health
Children with Special Health Needs
Maine Birth Defects Program
11 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011
<http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/boh/cshn/index.html>
Telephone: 207-287-8424 or 1-800-698-3624
TTY: 1-800-606-0215



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Children with Special Health Needs Maine Birth Defects Program





The Maine Birth Defects Program:

- Started in 1999
- Works with Hospitals, Primary Care Providers and other Health Providers who diagnosis birth defects.
- Collects information on 22 Birth Defects

The information is used to:

- Assess the full impact of birth defects on Maine children and their families
- Improve access to specialty services for families
- Locate resources for emotional and economic support
- Monitor trends related to the prevalence of selected birth defects in Maine
- Decrease the incidence of birth defects through education of providers and the general public

The list of reportable birth defects includes:

- Major heart defects
- Neural tube defects
- Cleft lip & palate
- Reduction deformities
- Hypospadias
- Down syndrome

Common Questions:

What is a birth defect?

Birth defects are structural or functional abnormalities that are present at birth

What Causes Birth Defects?

- 70% of birth defects have no known cause
- The remaining birth defects are caused by genetic factors, environmental factors or a combination of the two

Remember:

- Most babies with birth defects are born to two parents with no known health problems or risk factors
- Even if you do everything your doctor tells you, you may still deliver a baby with a birth defect

What can be done to decrease the risk of birth defects?

- Don't drink alcohol, smoke or use illegal drugs
- Get early and regular prenatal care
- Take 400 mcg a day of folic acid recommended by the CDC

Remember:

- Many birth defects occur during the first 3 month of pregnancy, a woman's awareness of her personal health risks and behaviors is important before becoming pregnant

How common are birth defects?

- One of every 33 babies in the United States is born with a birth defect
- There are several thousand birth defects identified
- Some of the most common birth defects affect the heart. Heart defects make up about one-third to one-fourth of all birth defects
- In every 1000 births, hearing loss affects 3-4 babies
- Other birth defects include neural tube defects which are defects of the spine and brain, Cleft lip and palate, Hypospadias found in male babies and Down syndrome

What if I have more questions?

Ask your prenatal care provider, baby's provider or contact the Maine Birth Defects Program. See contact info on the back of the brochure



Questions developed from information from the National Birth Defects Prevention Network and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention